COMIC CUTS 2D

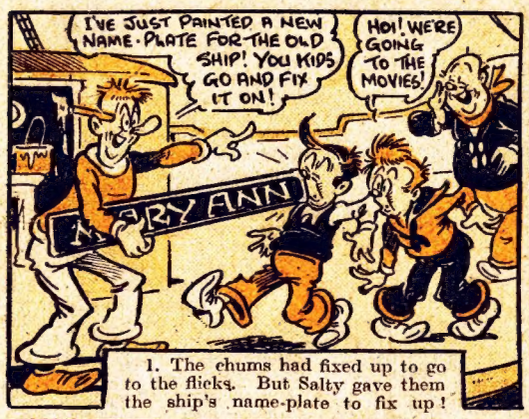
PACKED WITH FUN AND THRILLS!

KING OF COMICS

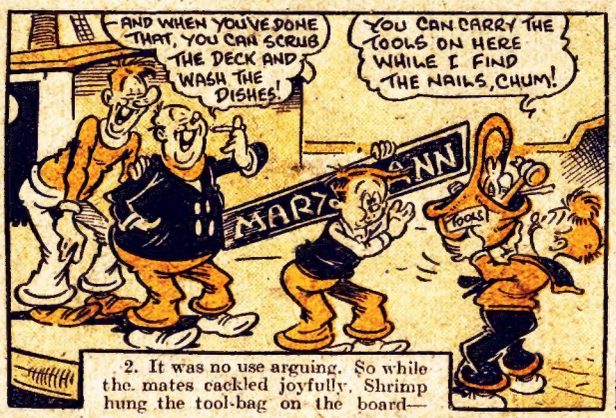
[No. 2,750.]

SAMMY AND THE SHRIMP FIX THINGS NICELY FOR THE MATES!

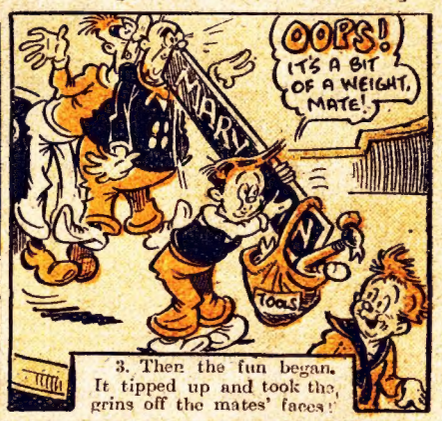
[September 23, 1944]



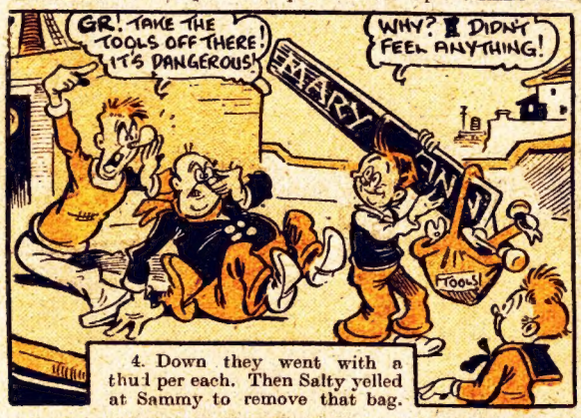
1. The chums had fixed up to go to the flicks. But Salty gave them the ship's name-plate to fix up!


AND WHEN YOU'VE DONE THAT, YOU CAN SCRUB THE DECK AND WASH THE DISHES!
YOU CAN CARRY THE TOOLS ON HERE WHILE I FIND THE NAILS, CHUM!
MARY ANN
TOOLS

2. It was no use arguing. So while the mates cackled joyfully, Shrimp hung the tool-bag on the board—



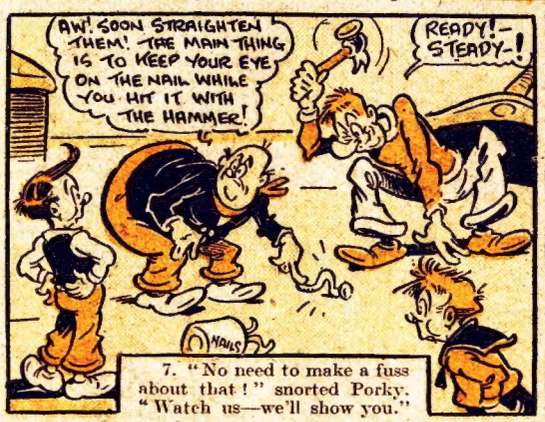
3. Then the fun began. It tipped up and took the grins off the mates' faces!



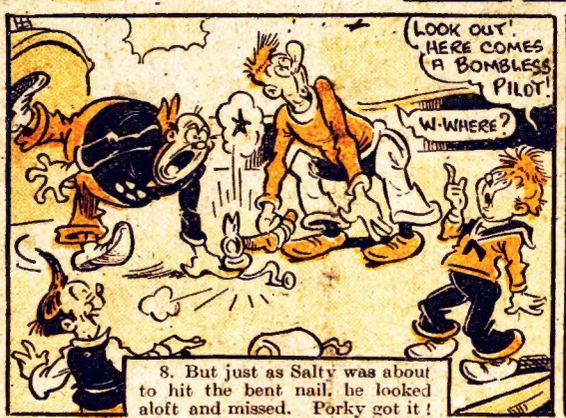
4. Down they went with a thud per each. Then Salty yelled at Sammy to remove that bag.

5. So Sammy obliged, and the mates stopped another—on the nut—zok!

6. After which our heroes got down to the job, but the Shrimp found that the nails were all bent.

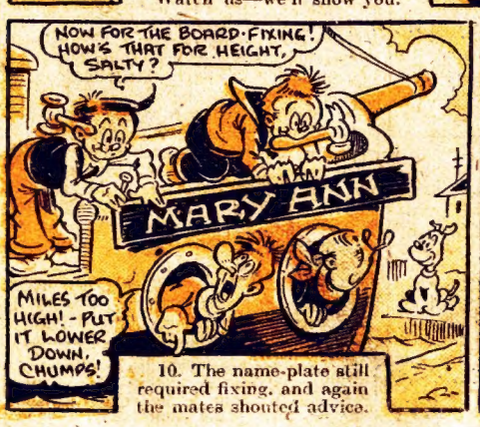


7. "No need to make a fuss about that!" snorted Porky. "Watch us—we'll show you."

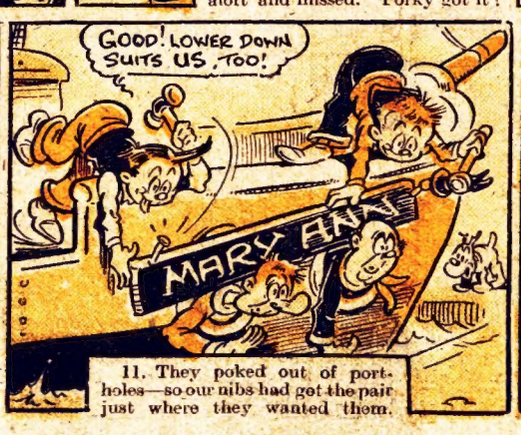


8. But just as Salty was about to hit the bent nail, he looked aloft and missed. Porky got it!

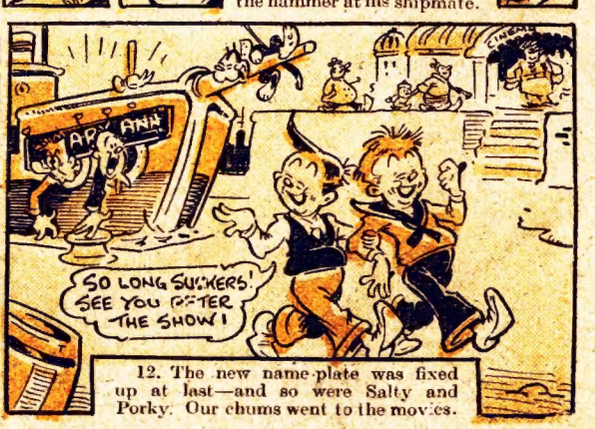
9. And it made him so very peeved that he heaved the hammer at his shipmate.



10. The name-plate still required fixing, and again the mates shouted advice.



11. They poked out of port-holes—so our nibs had got the pair just where they wanted them.



12. The new name-plate was fixed up at last—and so were Salty and Porky. Our chums went to the movies.

A smashing story of a dauntless R.A.F. pilot's peril!

HAPPY LANDING!

Reg smashed both fists down upon the head of the Nazi pilot!

Surprise Meeting.

TO the full-throated roar of a powerful engine, a fast scouting plane took off from the flight-deck of the aircraft-carrier, H.M.S. Kite, steaming among the fleet in Seine Bay. It was a new Seafire D, a twin seater equipped with special cameras, and the crew consisted of Lieutenant Reg Crowther of the Fleet Air Arm, the brilliant young pilot, and the stocky Georges Cartier, his observer, of the Free French, who wore the cross of Lorraine on his naval uniform.

This was just another routine flight, a wide sweep over the English Channel towards Le Havre and a circular air tour over the part of Normandy back to the ship.

As the plane sped eastward the Frenchman in the seat behind Reg spoke his mind over the inter-comm. telephone.

"I t'ink, mon ami," he remarked, "zat eet is sad we do not take bombs for ze Boches. I would like more better to drop ze bombs instead of take ze pictures."

"We've got guns, old sportsman," Reg reminded, "and there's always the chance of our meeting Hun fighters, especially in this cloudy weather. This is just the right sort of day for a sortie by old Vill-o'-der-Visk."

"Oui, mon ami," agreed Georges, "ze Will-o'-ze-Wisp is vair fond of ze clouds."

It was the nickname given by the Allied airmen to Kapitan Karl Visk, now hailed in Germany as the ace of the Luftwaffe. He claimed a large number of "kills," but whereas some of these existed only in his own imagination he had built up a fair total by improved methods of using the clouds for ambush.

Of late the German "ace" had become more arrogant, and made show of a more dare-devil spirit by flying a black-painted Focke-Wulf 190 to lead his Messerschmitt squadron of fighters.

But Georges Cartier, the French observer, cared no more about Kapitan Visk as an individual than he did for any other hated Hun—except one arch-Hun only.

"Do you know what I wish for, mon ami," Georges added; "it ees zat one fine day Visk gets ze order to take General von Koppner for ze reconnaissance flight over ze battlefields of Normandy. Sacre! I would give my two arms for one leetle chance to shoot Koppner, zat dirty butcher!"

For Georges Cartier, riding with Reg Crowther through the sky in the fast-flying Seafire D, was a native of the little village of Oulray in the Ardennes. And General von Koppner was commandant of that district who gave the barbarous order for the massacre of every Oulray villager after an act of sabotage committed by some person unknown.

To-day, the flight of the Seafire was uneventful as usual until the return over the battlefields area. It was then that Reg caught a glimpse of a lame British bomber escorted by two Marauders struggling homeward.

Flying high at the time he saw them through a break in the clouds, and then heard Georges' excited cry:

"Les Boches!"

At the same moment he saw a flight of three Messerschmitts come diving through the clouds to take the lame bomber by surprise before the Marauders could intervene. The luck was in! Reg was heading towards the enemy machines that had been wheeling high before gliding down swiftly to the attack. His guns opened up with a chattering din, and one of the Huns hurtled out of the sky.

Themselves taken by surprise, the other two Germans swerved on their downward course and banked away; and thereby they were seen by the Marauders which promptly chased them away. But meantime something else came within the range of Reg's vision—something that looked like a flash of black lightning out of the grey clouds.

Visk in his Focke-Wulf! Reg instantly recalled how other pilots had described Visk's sombre-painted F.W.190 as striking "like black lightning," and here by good fortune was the German ace in the sky, and apparently intent only on making a vicious surprise attack on the lame British bomber!

To think was to act with Reg Crowther, who saw a heaven-sent chance of ending Visk's notorious career, and, with a slight movement on control-stick and rudder-bar, he sent the Seafire roaring to intercept the all-black plane.

The German had thought to make an easy kill, but now, to his own surprise, found himself set upon by a British scout who hurtled at him with flaming guns. He swung over stick and rudder. The black machine zigzagged like a startled snipe, leaving the distressed bomber to seek shelter in a heavy cloud-bank and proceed out across the Channel for home. Bullets struck into the F.W.'s fuselage and cut one of the controls. The hunted plane rolled in the air, and the pilot tumbled out as it flew upside-down for a short distance, then went swaying earthward under his opened parachute.

"Sacre!" screeched Georges excitedly. "Ze dirty Boche is not yet killed!"

Reg turned the Seafire away and saw the German land on Normandy soil far behind the British lines. He saw something else, too—the Focke-Wulf go into a "falling-leaf" spin down to the ground without further damage.

Curious to see the notorious Nazi ace and his machine, Reg followed them down. He was used to tight landings on an aircraft-carrier, and pancaked without difficulty upon a small open space of ground towards which a number of excited British troops came running.

Before he climbed out of the cockpit several Marine commandos recognised him by his stocky figure and exceptionally long arms, and raised a special cheer. Fortune had smiled, and both he and Georges were in high heart over their success, which was the greater because the Focke-Wulf could be repaired easily and made serviceable for Allied use.

Naturally, they wanted to meet Kapitan Visk, the vaunted ace who had baled out so speedily, but a shock awaited them when Brigadier-General Barnden in command of the troops in that area drove up in a staff car and gave news of the enemy airman captured two or three miles away.

"This is Visk's plane without a doubt," the brigadier said, "but the ace wasn't in it. The pilot was a lieutenant named Johann Schmidt who usually flies an M.E. . in Visk's squadron."

The chums' disappointment was keen.

"For all that, you chaps have done a sound spot of work," the Army officer consoled. "Your chance will come again in the future, Cartier, I'm sure." Then, addressing himself to Reg, he said: "Meantime, Crowther, if you're willing to tackle another job before you report back to your ship, I can offer you one—a tricky and dangerous job that'll suit you, I think."

Hun Justice.

BRIGADIER-GENERAL BARNDEN stated that the captive, Schmidt, refused to say where Kapitan Visk was stationed or why he had not been flying his own aircraft on that day. But there was a more important matter than getting news of Visk's whereabouts, and this the brigadier explained to Reg, whose adventurous spirit delighted in the prospect of any risky job.

"We're after bigger game, Crowther," he said; "none other than General von Koppner the butcher. From secret sources we've heard that he's established himself at Neufont, forty miles south-east of here, but so far we've not been able to locate his headquarters. Now, repairs are being made to the F.W.'s controls, and I want you to fly this Jerry plane low over Neufont and take photographs with one of your own cameras that'll be installed quickly The job must be done soon, before the enemy suspects that anything has happened to the plane and pilot. Can you recognise Neufont from the air?"

"Easily, sir," Reg assured him. "There's a large green pond on the outskirts."

"Then get going," said the brigadier. "Cartier can stand by the Seafire till you return, and that shouldn't be long."

Mechanics transferred the high-powered camera, and within a few minutes Reg took-off in the machine whose wings bore the black cross of Nazi Germany.

Not all the Allied gunners could be warned in time of the stunt, with the result that hot bursts of fire from British and American artillery harassed him on his way across the lines toward Neufont. A small fragment cut into a petrol-feed, and the leak with its resultant acrid smell gave him anxiety.

But soon Reg saw the French market town, and a pool of shimmering green that helped him to identify it. He went in low over Neufont, and beetled round over the roof-tops taking close-up photographs that could never have been obtained by a scout marked with the R.A.F. roundels or American star. Not a gun was fired at him, and he almost forgot the petrol leak in his enjoyment of the situation.

"Aw, it's just the cake!" Reg chuckled.

He flew low and slowly, and appreciated the spectacle of an assembly of German Army officers and troops in the market place. A ceremony of some kind had started, but it was held up as the lone Focke-Wulf continued to cruise about overhead.

"The blighters are getting suspicious," Reg told himself; "maybe it's time I tootled back with the jolly old snapshots."

He made a last, slow flight round the town, and suddenly gasped with astonishment at what he noticed. A large dog was trotting across the shimmering green pool.

A dog running on water! Such a feat would be a miracle—and Reg Crowther was no believer in miracles. He was, though, remarkably quick in the uptake, and had figured out the real facts of the case almost before he had banked away. There was no water there. The pond had been emptied at some period, and the area covered with heavy panes of bottle-green glass—and no doubt the high-powered camera would be able to reveal the joins. But the Germans must have had a purpose for undertaking the work, and no doubt the glass concealed excavations used for General von Koppner's secret headquarters!

No better hide-out could be conceived, for Allied airmen would never drop their bombs into what was believed to be a large pool of stagnant water. So Reg was thinking to himself when the Focke-Wulf's engine cut out abruptly and the plane stalled. By quick and expert action, he regained control just sufficiently to direct it away from the roofs and to the nearest open space—that market square where units of the Nazi Army were assembled.

The Germans bounded away like scared rabbits, and the machine pancaked down and came to a halt without injuring anyone. But within a matter of a minute or two, Reg Crowther, breathless and shaken, was standing under a strong guard of Storm Troopers and facing General von Koppner.

The brutal German commander asked for no explanations; he was able to judge very accurately for himself what had occurred.

"So, schweinhund," he rasped, after the camera had been removed from the plane, "you come mit our Focke-Wulf to make pictures of Neufont, hein? But I vould not haf you put in der prison camp, mein friendt. I vill send you back to der perfidious Englanders, and mitout your so-beautiful pictures."

He beckoned to a Luftwaffe officer, and Reg quickly realised it was none other than Kapitan Visk, who was among several assembled to receive decorations. The young Englishman's hands were tied behind him, and he was ushered into a car and driven swiftly to an airfield not far outside the town. The general and Kapitan Visk arrived immediately afterwards, and Reg was thrust into a twin-seater aircraft and the perplex hood rolled back. Then Visk entered and strapped himself to the front seat at the controls.

"Take goot care, Kapitan Visk," leered Von Koppner, speaking in his broken English; "do not fly upside-down till der airplane is high over der Englander lines."

The brutal plot was plain enough now, and a cold chill assailed Reg's spine as the machine taxied across the airfield and sped into the sky. Mingled with the scream of the wind, he heard Visk's harsh laughter as the plane gained height to cross the fighting lines in Normandy. In another minute or two, the Hun pilot on Von Koppner's orders would roll the aircraft over, safely for himself as he was strapped in, but with the certain result that the doomed passenger would be flung out to fall thousands of feet to destruction!

The threat of impending doom caused Reg to struggle at his bonds. He loosened them a little but could not get his hands free. He pressed his long arms downward, and by a desperate effort that brought cold sweat to his forehead, forced his hands under his haunches, and then, by a further acrobatic wriggle, pressed them in turn under each foot. Now they were in front of him, and as Visk began to roll the plane slowly, he smashed both fists down upon the head of the Nazi pilot. The German's forehead struck the control board, and, battered into senselessness, he slumped limply in his seat.

Leaning over, Reg pressed the control-stick forward and sent the plane into a dive. High speed alone saved it from being shot down by Allied guns, and despite the difficulties the young British pilot effected a landing near the coast.

He had captured the vaunted ace, and he needed no photographs to record the position of General von Koppner's headquarters. Within a short time after making contact with Brigadier-General Barnden, a force of British bombers smashed the secret hide-out to ruins and annihilated "the butcher" and nearly all the officers of his staff.

And with those bombers went Georges Cartier by special request to wreak the vengeance he had vowed to take!

(More thrills await you in next Friday week's rousing story of Merchant Navy heroes.) 23-9-44

Readers who have difficulty in obtaining regular copies of COMIC CUTS are advised to place an order with their newsagents immediately.

THE EAVESDROPPER!

Under Suspicion.

IT was midday when Kenton Steel's car drew up outside the door of Trentwood, a big country house that had meant an hour's run down for the detective.

He gave his name to the maid who opened the door, and was promptly shown into the presence of his client, a Mr. Wilfred Santley. He was a man of about fifty-five, tall and upright, with close-cropped grey hair.

"Pleased to meet you, Mr. Steel," he greeted. "Please sit down."

The detective complied, and his client then proceeded to give the story of the trouble that had occurred and which had caused him to phone Steel earlier that morning to come along, if possible.

"My safe was burgled last night, Mr. Steel," he said in a crisp, businesslike tone. "Jewellery belonging to my wife has disappeared, together with a sum of money in pound notes. It was all there yesterday evening before I went to bed—that I can vouch for. This morning I made the discovery that the safe had been rifled."

"Forced?" asked Steel.

"I should say no," was the reply. "There is no sign of any force having been used, although perhaps your eagle eye can detect things that I would overlook. My theory is that it was opened with a key, either a duplicate or my own. Though how anybody could get possession of mine I can't say for the life of me."

He paused, and fished a key out of his pocket, the only one on a small ring.

"There you are, there's my safe key," he said, passing it to Steel. "I carry it on me all day, and at night invariably put it under my pillow. I put it there last night, and it was there right enough this morning."

Steel examined the key intently for some time through a powerful glass, then returned it to his client. The two men then crossed to the wall safe which had been rifled.

The detective spent a good while examining it, both inside and out.

"Opened with a key right enough," he said. "So somebody must have got hold of yours somehow. That would be necessary, anyway, even to make a duplicate."

"Well, they must have been jolly smart, that's all I can say," declared Santley. "I admit I'm a pretty sound sleeper. But, hang it all, I would surely be disturbed if somebody rummaged under my pillow?"

"Some thieves have very delicate fingers," Steel reminded him, with a smile. "That's why they succeed so well—for a time. They all come a cropper in the end. But that by the way. Tell me, have you found signs of the house being entered from outside?"

"Well, there's nothing forced, if that's what you mean," was the reply. "But you quite understand that in this weather there are a good many windows left open all night—bed-rooms, for instance. So a burglar would not have very much trouble in breaking in."

"Evidently not," agreed Steel. "All the same, there's that key or its duplicate to be accounted for. The safe was definitely unlocked. I think I'll go over the house, if I may, and have a good look round."

"With pleasure," assented Santley, and led the detective on a tour of the mansion.

They returned at last to the room they had left and resumed their seats. Then Steel proceeded to put a few questions.

He learned that Mrs. Santley was away. But young Bert Santley, home on leave, was not only spending the time at Trentwood, but had brought along two friends, Reg Taylor and Leslie Showler.

"And where are these young gentlemen at the moment?" inquired the detective.

"Oh, I believe they're out in the grounds, amusing themselves," replied his client. "They know about the robbery, of course, and are very disturbed about it. Still, I don't want this business to spoil my son's leave, and he'll be relieved to know that I've called you in."

"I shall be pleased to meet him and his friends," said Steel.

"You will do so at lunch," replied Santley. "That won't be very long now, and I expect you'll be ready for it after your run down from town."

It was about half an hour later when young Bert Santley, a fine chap, very like his father, came into the house with his two friends Taylor and Showler. They were all introduced to Steel.

"So you've come along to try and track the dirty dog who robbed the dad's safe last night, eh?" said Bert Santley. "I hope you succeed."

"So do I," added Reg Taylor.

"And I do, too," chimed in Showler. "It's a rotten thing to happen, and I don't mind admitting that I feel quite uncomfortable about it."

"But why?" asked Steel.

"Well, you see," continued Showler, with a somewhat lame smile, "I—I haven't known Bert very long, and I think it's awfully decent of him to ask me here. And now this happens!"

"But there's no need for you to worry about it at all," broke in Mr. Santley. "You forget all about it, Showler, and leave the whole business to our friend Kenton Steel."

Lunch was served shortly afterwards, and the whole party sat down to discuss anything and everything save the robbery. Steel himself deliberately made no reference to the business, and seemed content to let the others make all the conversation.

But although the detective said but little, he missed nothing. His senses were all alert and he seemed particularly interested in Bert Santley's two friends. Each in turn came under his long, keen scrutiny.

"Well, let's go outside for a smoke," suggested Mr. Santley at last. "It'll be nicer out in the open."

They passed through the french windows on to the lawn and lit up cigarettes. As they wandered round the flower beds Steel suddenly noticed that Showler was by his side.

"Excuse me, Mr. Steel," he said apologetically, "but have you got any clue about the safe robbery yet?"

Steel's eyes narrowed.

"Not yet," he replied rather coldly. "Not what I would call a real clue. But I've noticed something that's set me thinking."

"And that is?" asked Showler.

"Entirely my own affair," rejoined Steel, with a disarming smile.

Showler's eyes boggled and he backed a pace, which brought about a minor disaster. He tripped over a lawn-edging rail and, unable to save himself, fell flat on his back on the turf.

He was quite unhurt and quickly scrambled to his feet, reddening at the laughter from the others.

"Serves me right for not looking where I was going," he blurted out, as he dusted himself down. "Now I shall have to pop up to my room to wash my hands. Excuse me."

He hurried away and was absent for some minutes. Then he came back and rejoined the party. And this time it was Steel who sidled up to Showler.

But he did not ask him any questions. He just walked beside him in silence, eyes narrowed and fixed on Showler's hands which had now been washed.

Suddenly Steel bent to admire a flower. His face was almost touching Showler's right hand. Then he stood up again and went on without a word.

But now the gleam in the detective's eye was very pronounced.

The Phone Call.

AS soon as the party returned to the house Steel drew his client on one side.

"I want to examine one or two rooms upstairs, if you will come with me," he said.

"Very good," said Mr. Santley. And, leaving his son talking to his friends, he accompanied the detective up the broad staircase.

"Which rooms did you want to examine?" he asked as they went.

"Those of your son's two friends," replied Steel. "And I'd like to have another look in your room as well. We'll do that afterwards."

Taylor's room was reached first, and Steel made a quick but competent examination of it. To the surprise of his client, he sniffed at several places.

"All right," said Steel at last, "now we'll go to Showler's room."

He made no sound as he crept up behind the eavesdropper.

It was farther along the corridor, by the head of another staircase leading down below. And here Steel went through a similar procedure, using his nostrils almost as much as his eyes.

He paid particular attention to the tablet of soap on the washstand, still showing signs of recent use with bubbles of lather adhering. At last he gave a curt nod and made for the door.

"Now your room, Mr. Santley, and sorry to give you all this trouble," he said.

"Not at all," was the gentleman's reply. "I only wish I knew just what was in your mind. But I'd never dream of asking that, of course."

Reaching Mr. Santley's room, Steel made for the bed and gave all his attention to the pillow and bolster beneath. Here again he sniffed continuously until at last a grunt escaped him.

"I think that's all I want to know," he said. "We can go downstairs now."

They made their way down below, to find the three young men seated in the lounge, smoking. They looked up as the other two entered, and suddenly Steel spoke.

"You may be interested to know," he announced, "that I have good reasons for believing that I am on the track of last night's burglar."

He turned to Mr. Santley.

"I shall return to town later on," he said, "and I'll give you a ring at nine o'clock to-night, telling you the name of the thief. But I shall be telling you in confidence. Nobody else is to be in the room with you when I phone."

"Very good, it shall be as you wish, Mr. Steel," said his client.

"No need to worry about us," broke in his son. "We're all going to the pictures, so we shan't be here."

"I—I shan't be going with you, Bert," said Showler. "I have some letters to write, so I'll spend the evening up in my room."

So it was arranged, and Steel then excused himself to go down to the village to make one or two purchases. He was back in about half an hour and realised that it was getting near the time for his promised departure.

"Well, I'm off," he said at last. "Don't disturb yourselves, anybody; I can see myself off. And don't forget that phone call at nine o'clock, Mr. Santley. I'll be seeing you later, I've no doubt. Cheerio!"

With that he left them in the lounge at the back of the big house and made his way to the front door. A few moments later faintly to the ears of the others came the sound of his car as it started up and drove off, though the sound was soon lost to hearing.

"I wonder what he'll have to tell you on the phone at nine, dad?" said Bert Santley. "Well, you can tell us that later. We two are off to the pictures. So-long, Showler; Hope you enjoy your letter-writing."

Bert Santley and Taylor went off on their visit to the pictures, and Showler shortly afterwards excused himself to go up to his room. Mr. Santley was left alone, to sit in silence, smoking a cigar, waiting—and wondering.

Time passed and the hands of the clock crept round to the hour of nine. At last it struck, and as the chimes died away there came the shrill buzz of the phone bell.

"Now for it!" cried Mr. Santley, making a snatch at the instrument and clapping it to his ear.

Little did he imagine what was transpiring in the hall outside!

Crouching by the closed door, his ear close to the keyhole, was a man, his face drawn. Behind him against the wall was a large box seat, the lid of which was silently raised.

And equally silently out of it stepped—Kenton Steel! He made no sound whatever as he crept up behind the stooping eavesdropper.

Next instant the silence was broken by what was almost a shout from Mr. Santley at the telephone.

"What's that?" he cried. "The thief is my son's friend Showler?"

"He knows!" gasped the listener at the door. "Steel knows the truth!"

"You're right, Showler!" broke in the detective's cold voice as the startled eavesdropper was firmly grasped by the wrist. "And now you have confirmed it yourself. Come inside and face the music!"

He threw open the door and pushed Showler inside. Mr. Santley had replaced the telephone and now he stared at the two intruders.

"You, Mr. Steel!" he blurted. "But I thought you had——"

"Gone back to town," broke in Steel, with a cold smile. "But I didn't. As you know, that was my assistant speaking to you just now, giving you the name of the thief. I got on to him earlier when I went down to the village. That was my real reason for going out.

"When I drove off I left my car a short distance away when it was beyond earshot, and ran back to the house, having purposely left the front door open. Then I hid in the box seat and waited till the phone call came. I already had my suspicions of Showler, and guessed he was alarmed and anxious to know what I had found out. That's why he excused himself from going to the pictures with the others. He wanted to find out so that he could take flight."

"But what made you suspect him?" asked Mr. Santley.

"The scented soap he used," replied Steel. "It's a distinct perfume, and there were faint traces of it about your pillow, due to when he crept in last night to get the safe key."

(Don't miss Friday week's Kenton Steel story.)

23-9-44

WADDLES THE WAITER
MAKES A RIVAL DROP IT!
THE NEXT ONE WHO BREAKS ANY DISHES WILL GET THE SACK!
YESSIR!
THIS IS WHERE I GET WADDLES THE SACK!
I MUST BE MORE CAREFUL!
TEE-HEE! THAT'LL DO IT!
WHOOPS!
BAM!
OO! I'VE DROPPED SOME MORE DISHES!
BAH! I'LL BREAK THEM ON HIS FAT HEAD!
STEP ON IT, CHUM!
OO-ER!
YOU'RE SACKED!
NOW I'LL SHARE ALL THE TIPS WITH ME!
TIP BOX

Waddles was promised the sack if he dropped any more china. But a rival waiter tried to help him out and dropped in for it himself. So Waddles clicked.

PLUM AND DUFF, THE BOYS OF THE BOLD BRIGADE!

1. Bogey arranged a mock battle to amuse the troops. And Suet, before shinning up the pole to peep around, told our boys to fix a strong point.

2. Then up aloft he slithered and shouted that he saw the enemy approaching. Meanwhile our two heroes helped themselves to a spiked railing.

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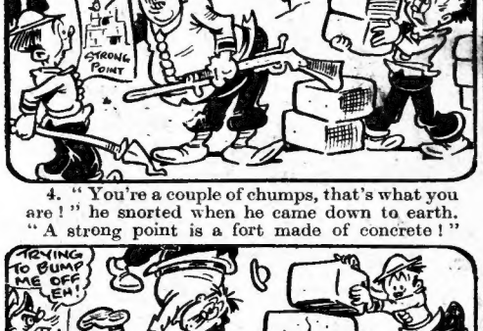
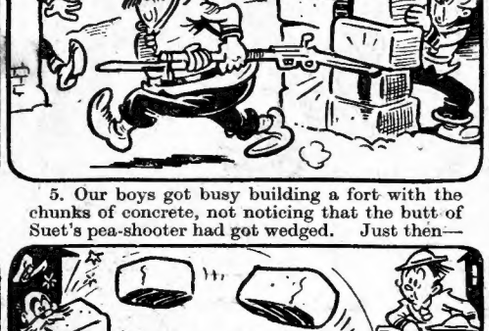


4. "You're a couple of chumps, that's what you are!" he snorted when he came down to earth. "A strong point is a fort made of concrete!"



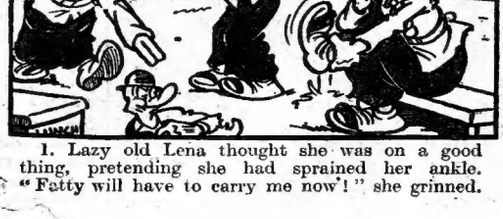
5. Our boys got busy building a fort with the chunks of concrete, not noticing that the butt of Suet's pea-shooter had got wedged. Just then—

6. Someone approached, and Suet challenged, as he should do. His gun being jammed, only the bayonet came loose. The newcomer was Bogey!

7. He had to make a wild leap for it, and he had a few words to say about it, too. In fact, in his wrath, he booted Suet good and hearty.

8. Again Sergy fell for it. He kissed the gun with his face, sending all the slabs of concrete flying hither and thither. Bogey stopped one!

9. And from that moment the mock battle became the real thing, with Bogey and Suet going it hammer and tongs, to the joy of the troops!



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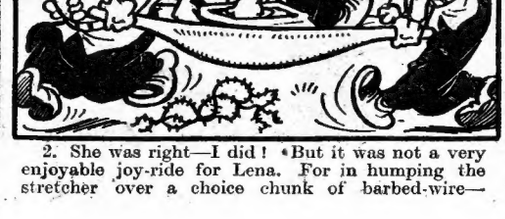

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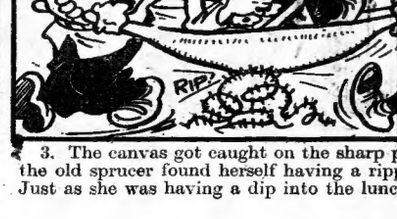

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COMIC CUTS
KING OF COMICS.

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QUIP And CRANKY
THIS PORTRAIT WAS DONE BY A PAINTER OF VERY HIGH STANDING
MY BROTHER IS A PAINTER OF VERY HIGH STANDING, TOO!
HM! I SUPPOSE HE PAINTS LANDSCAPES AND SEASCAPES?
NO!- FIRE ESCAPES!
WHY DON'T YOU GET UP EARLIER IN THE MORNING?
YAW! IF I GOT UP ANY EARLIER I SHOULD MEET MYSELF GOING TO BED!

KITTY Pretty & Witty!
HELPS FREDA TO GET OFF!
I'M TIRED OF HIKING! LET'S HAVE A SEE-SAW, KITTY!
ORCHARD
O.K!
COO! LOOK! PEARS!
COO! YOU MUSTN'T, FREDA!
I'LL HAVE SOME
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SERVES HER RIGHT!
SHE'S GOT A MAN AT LAST!
OHO! PILFERING MY PEARS, EH!
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COME ALONG O' ME!

Freda saw a see-saucy way of helping herself to the choice fruit. It worked a treat until she tried to let Kitty down. Then she got bumped off nicely.

PLUM AND DUFF, THE BOYS OF THE BOLD BRIGADE!

I'LL POP UP THE POLE AND LOOK FOR THE ENEMY! - YOU TUD PUT UP A STRONGPOINT JUST HERE!
MOCK BATTLE TO DAY
AH! I SPY 'EM LOOK OUT- IM COMING DOWN NOW!
YOWK! I'M STUNG!
COO! WHAT'S HE GONE UP THE POLE AGAIN FOR?
NITWITS! A STRONGPOINT IS MADE OF CHUNKS OF CONCRETE!
IT'S A KIND OF FORT!
OH! WE FORT IT WAS SOMETHING ELSE!
STRONG POINT
WHO'S THIS COMING? - HALT! WHO GOES THERE - FRIEND OR A BLINKIN' OFFICER?
HO! I'M ON YOUR SIDE, CHUMP!
TRYING TO BUMP ME OFF EH!
IT'S FIXED!
GO AND TAKE YOURSELF PRISONER!
CANTEEN

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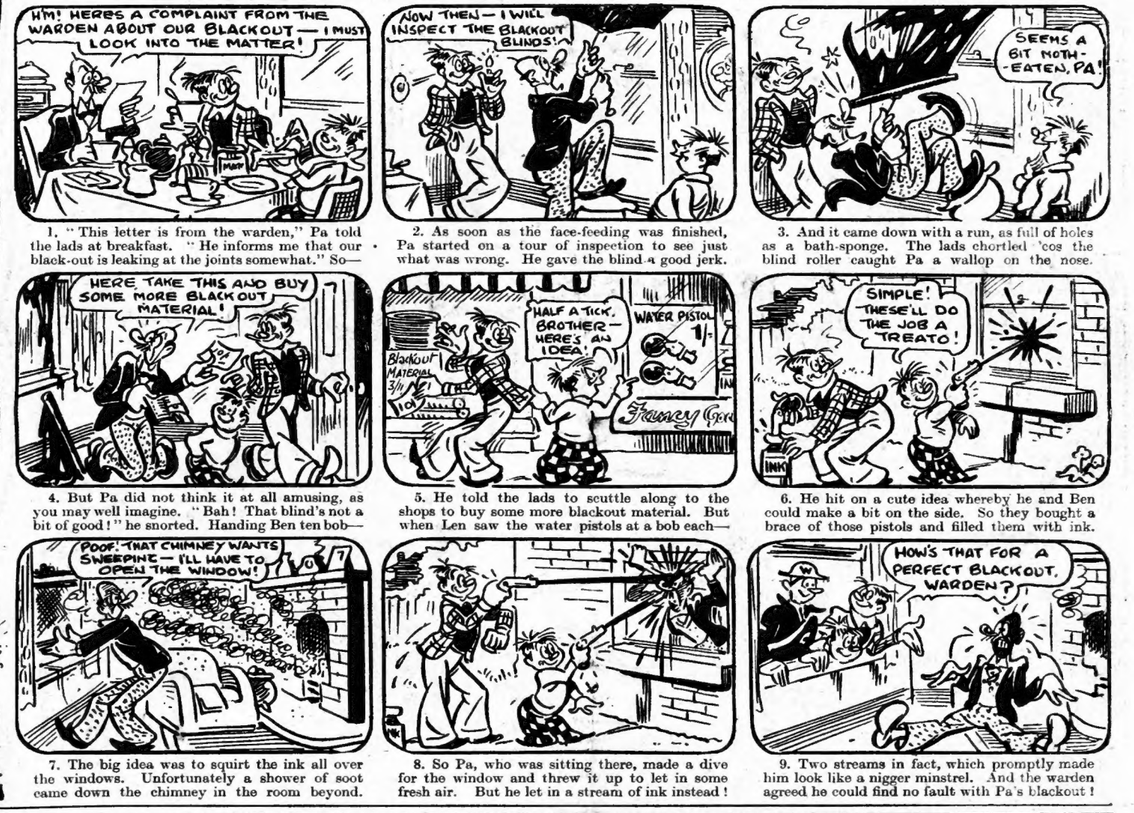
BIG BEN AND LITTLE LEN, THE LARKY LADS!


HM! HERE'S A COMPLAINT FROM THE WARDEN ABOUT OUR BLACKOUT — I MUST LOOK INTO THE MATTER!
NOW THEN — I WILL INSPECT THE BLACKOUT BLINDS!
SEEMS A BIT MOTH-EATEN, PA!
HERE, TAKE THIS AND BUY SOME MORE BLACKOUT MATERIAL!
HALF A TICK, BROTHER — HERE'S AN IDEA!
BLACKOUT MATERIAL
WATER PISTOL 1/-
SIMPLE! THESE'LL DO THE JOB A TREATO!
POOF! THAT CHIMNEY WANTS SWEEPING — I'LL HAVE TO OPEN THE WINDOW!
HOW'S THAT FOR A PERFECT BLACKOUT, WARDEN?

1. "This letter is from the warden," Pa told the lads at breakfast. "He informs me that our black-out is leaking at the joints somewhat." So—

2. As soon as the face-feeding was finished, Pa started on a tour of inspection to see just what was wrong. He gave the blind a good jerk.

3. And it came down with a run, as full of holes as a bath-sponge. The lads chortled 'cos the blind roller caught Pa a wallop on the nose.

4. But Pa did not think it at all amusing, as you may well imagine. "Bah! That blind's not a bit of good!" he snorted. Handing Ben ten bob—

5. He told the lads to scuttle along to the shops to buy some more blackout material. But when Len saw the water pistols at a bob each—

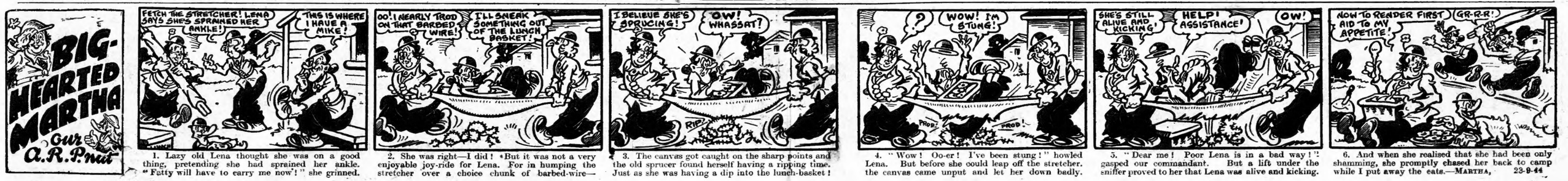
6. He hit on a cute idea whereby he and Ben could make a bit on the side. So they bought a brace of those pistols and filled them with ink.

7. The big idea was to squirt the ink all over the windows. Unfortunately a shower of soot came down the chimney in the room beyond.

8. So Pa, who was sitting there, made a dive for the window and threw it up to let in some fresh air. But he let in a stream of ink instead!

9. Two streams in fact, which promptly made him look like a nigger minstrel. And the warden agreed he could find no fault with Pa's blackout!

BIG-HEARTED MARTHA Our A.R.P nut


FETCH THE STRETCHER! LENA SAYS SHE'S SPRAINED HER ANKLE!
THIS IS WHERE I HAVE A MIKE!
OO! I NEARLY TROD ON THAT BARBED WIRE!
I'LL SNEAK SOMETHING OUT OF THE LUNCH BASKET!
I BELIEVE SHE'S SPRUCING!
OW! WHASSAT?
RIP!
WOW! I'M STUNG!
PROD!
SHE'S STILL ALIVE AND KICKING!
HELP! ASSISTANCE!
OW!
NOW TO RENDER FIRST AID TO MY APPETITE!
GR-R-R!

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2. She was right—I did! But it was not a very enjoyable joy-ride for Lena. For in humping the stretcher over a choice chunk of barbed-wire—

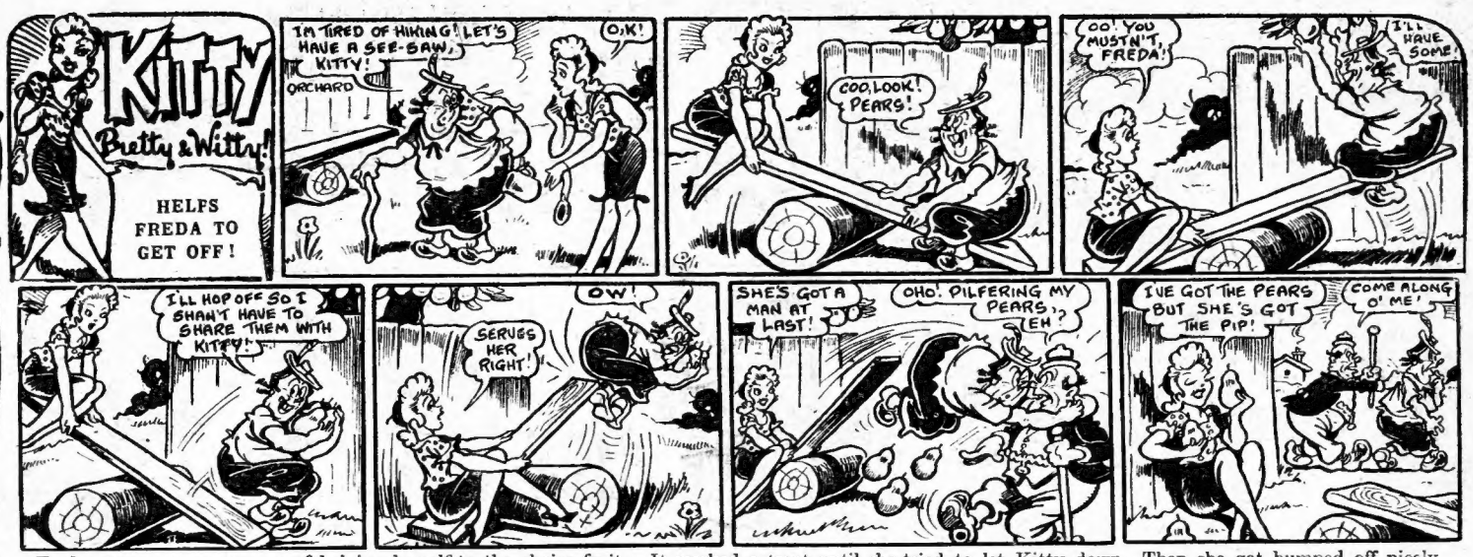
3. The canvas got caught on the sharp points and the old sprucer found herself having a ripping time. Just as she was having a dip into the lunch-basket!

4. "Wow! Oo-er! I've been stung!" howled Lena. But before she could leap off the stretcher, the canvas came unput and let her down badly.

5. "Dear me! Poor Lena is in a bad way!" gasped our commandant. But a lift under the sniffer proved to her that Lena was alive and kicking.

6. And when she realised that she had been only shamming, she promptly chased her back to camp while I put away the eats.—MARTHA, 23-9-44

CUTS
COMICS.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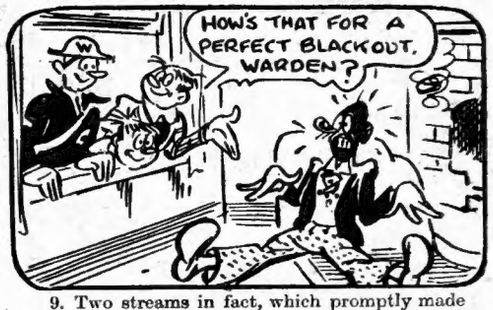

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ROVER JOE

The Golden Tomahawk.

A BIG, excited crowd packed the huge, brightly coloured marquee pitched just outside the Western cow-town of Roxville. It was the Big Top of Butler's Mammoth Travelling Circus, and the show was in full swing.

One of the most interested onlookers in that jolly, noisy audience was Rover Joe. The little range wanderer had not visited a circus for years, and he seemed to recapture much of the buoyant enthusiasm of his boyhood as he sat watching the riders, the performing animals, the clowns, and the whirlwind acrobats.

But one turn thrilled Joe more than any other. It was the amazing act of Grey Feather, a tall, lithe young Redskin, who performed the most miraculous feats with a pile of gaily hued tomahawks. In all his years of roaming the Wild West, Joe had never seen skill to equal that of Grey Feather, billed as "The Wizard of the Tomahawks."

Only one thing about the act puzzled the little range tramp. Although the Redskin used a couple of dozen tomahawks in the course of his sensational turn, he kept one tucked in his wampun belt during the whole performance. It was not until his act reached its triumphant end that he whipped out this tomahawk, kissed it, and then waved it high in the air as he war-whooped in delight at the terrific applause.

And that tomahawk flashed and glinted golden in the arc lights. The head of the tomahawk was made, in fact, from solid gold!

"Gee, I kinda reckon that's risky, toting a golden tomahawk around!" Rover Joe muttered to himself as he left the circus grounds and mounted Sleepy, his faithful old grey. "Guess that thyar Injun chopper must be worth a few dollars."

The little range wanderer was soon hitting the trail, and the sun was sinking slowly behind the tall firs fringing the hillside when he reined in Sleepy and decided to camp down beside the deserted, sheltered trail for the night.

Having tethered his old grey, Joe began to sing to himself in his lazy, tuneless drawl as he prepared a fire.

Soon the little Westerner's wizened face was beaming as he sniffed appreciatively at the aroma of coffee coming from the billycan suspended over the fire.

"Reckon supper won't be long now," he chuckled. Then he sat bolt upright, listening intently.

Clear on the still evening air came the clatter of a galloping horse's hoofs.

Joe craned forward, peering through the bushes. Next moment a chestnut mustang galloped past and disappeared in a cloud of dust down the trail. Crouched over the animal's back was a Red Indian. It puzzled Joe, for Redmen were not often seen in these parts.

Then before the little range roamer could pour himself out a mug of steaming coffee his keen ears picked up the sound of approaching hoofs for the second time. Again he peered through the trees, and once more a horse galloped into view. On its back was another Redskin, riding as though his very life was at stake.

Joe stared at the young rider as he went flashing past: then his eyebrows suddenly flicked up. He had recognised that crouching, grim young Indian.

It was Grey Feather, the tomahawk wizard from the circus!

Joe ran forward, a puzzled frown creasing his weather-hardened countenance. But Grey Feather was lost in a drifting cloud of white dust.

"Gee, those two guys seem in an almighty hurry!" Joe muttered. "I wonder——"

He broke off, stiffening alertly. A shot had split the stillness—a shot that had come from down the trail.

"Grey Feather!" he rapped. "That guy's in trouble!"

A few moments later the little wanderer was astride Sleepy's bare back and galloping down the trail in the fast-gathering dusk, fearful of what he might find.

It was not long before his keen eyes spotted a roan horse grazing beside the trail. Crawling towards it was a young Redskin, with a single grey feather protruding from the leather band around his shiny black hair.

Joe dismounted and ran towards the lad he knew to be Grey Feather.

"Say, pard, what's happened? Who fired that shot?" he asked in a kindly voice, as he helped the Redskin to his feet. "Gee, yo're hurt, son——"

"It is nothing," answered the grim-eyed young Redman. "Just a flesh wound in my thigh. I was shot——" He gritted his teeth as though to bite back the pain he was suffering. "Please help me to remount. I must hit the trail again at once."

"Not so fast, pardner," Joe broke in. "Say, let's take a looksee at that leg o' yores." He stooped to inspect the deep wound, and he knew in a moment that it was worse than the young Redskin would admit. "Guess this needs treatment, son," he added.

Despite Grey Feather's protests, the little range tramp took him back to his camp, and while he tended the injury, Rover Joe told Grey Feather how he had admired his circus act. And as he warmed to the little man's friendly way, the young Redskin talked.

Following the circus performance, Grey Feather had been called away from his tent. When he returned he saw another Red Indian mount a horse near by and gallop away.

"I found he had stolen my tomahawks," he said bitterly. "That is why I set off in pursuit. And by my sacred grey feather, I should have caught him had he not fired at me and caused me to fall from my horse." He glanced down as Joe bandaged his leg. "Please—please hurry, paleface. I must continue the chase. I must recover my precious tomahawks. The honour of my tribe is at stake!"

The last cryptic remark somewhat puzzled the little wanderer, but although he probed for more information, Grey Feather's only interest lay in continuing the chase.

"My thanks to you, paleface brother," he said, raising a hand high in the Redskin salute. "Now I will take the trail again, for I swear by my forefathers that I will overtake the vile deceiver who has taken unto himself the tomahawks of my tribe!"

But Joe did not mean to allow Grey Feather to go off alone, and the Redskin's serious face relaxed in a flashing smile for just a moment when the little roamer expressed his desire to accompany him in pursuit of the thief.

Darkness had fallen as they rode off, but the trail was lit by a brilliant full moon. Joe feared that pursuit was well-nigh hopeless, but Grey Feather rode on, silent and relentless, and Joe marvelled at the lad's wonderful tracking instinct.

At last the young Redman reined in and pointed to a far ridge, outlined in the moonlight, to where a tiny wisp of smoke was curling up from a belt of trees.

"Yonder smoke comes from the camp of the vile one," said Grey Feather grimly.

Next moment the Redskin circus star urged on his gallant horse. Joe soon overtook him, and in the moonlight they quickly neared the trees from which smoke curled up.

Dismounting and leading their horses, the two trackers approached the camp. Then suddenly they heard upraised voices. Together they pressed forward—to witness an amazing sight.

They had tracked the thieving Redman to his camp, but it seemed they were too late. The Indian was roped and sat astride his horse, which was being led away by a posse of armed men. And their leader wore a silver star on his breast—a sheriff's star! Grey Feather uttered a low cry and was about to rush forward. But Rover Joe pulled him back, restraining him.

"Wait, pard," he rapped. "Guess we'll have to step kinda gentle, like. That's the sheriff o' Blue Falls, and yore man looks like he's gotten himself arrested."

Grey Feather started to search the thief's camping site. Joe joined him. Suddenly the young Indian gave a glad cry, and, stooping, he snatched up a tomahawk that had been slung at a near-by tree. It was one of his own!

Then Joe spotted more of the stolen tomahawks. They glinted in the moonlight at the bottom of a small crevasse. Obviously the thief had flung them away; maybe when he had been surprised by the arrival of the sheriff and his posse.

A tomahawk flashed through the window and stuck quivering in the doorpost.

Lowering himself on his lasso, one end of which he lashed to a tall tree, Joe clambered down into the crevasse, recovered all the tomahawks, and was hauled back again by the grateful young Redskin.

Quickly he counted them. Then Grey Feather's face fell once more.

"It is bad medicine," he gritted. "All but one of my precious tomahawks are here. My mascot, the Golden Tomahawk, treasure of my tribe, is still missing. It must be found, paleface, or the honour of my tribe is defiled—and I shall be outlawed!"

Together he and Joe searched for more than an hour, but there was still no sign of the missing Golden Tomahawk. Why it meant so much to Grey Feather Joe could not guess, but it was obvious that its loss was causing the young Redskin terrible distress.

Suddenly the little range roamer straightened. There was a queer glint in his eyes.

"Say, pard," he exclaimed, "I think I've gotten an idea! Now, don't you worry—we'll get back that Golden Tomahawk!"

Released from the Lock-up.

A LITTLE later Joe and his Red Indian companion rode down into the township of Blue Falls and reined in outside the sheriff's office. Leaving Grey Feather with the horses, Joe sought out the sheriff, and learned from him that the Redskin had been rounded up and arrested for a minor robbery committed earlier that day. The posse had been waiting for him up in the hills, and now he was in the lock-up.

That was all Joe wished to know. As he listened to the sheriff he lazily lit a cigarette and moved towards the window. Then, by means of a few puffs of smoke from his pursed lips, he flashed a signal to Grey Feather, waiting out of sight.

Suddenly, something flashed through the open window and stuck, quivering, in the doorpost. It was an Indian tomahawk!

"Hey! What galoot's tryin' to murder me?" yelled the sheriff. "Gee, it's that Red thief's pard, I shouldn't wonder!" And he went dashing out into the moonlight.

"Mighty fine work, Grey Feather!" Joe chuckled to himself, for this was all part of his plan to help the young Redskin. "Now to get this guy outa the lock-up!"

Once the sheriff was out of sight and earshot, it took Joe a very few minutes to force the gaol door, and at the point of his menacing six-shooter he ordered the startled Redman to walk out.

Outside the office waited Grey Feather. After he had thrown the tomahawk he had led the enraged sheriff a merry dance down the main street, and then, throwing the man off the scent, he had returned to Joe's assistance.

In silence he and Joe roped the released Redman, and when they rode off again the wild-eyed crook was forced to run behind Sleepy. By the time they reached the camp in the hills he was in no mood to resist Joe's rapid questioning.

Trembling with fear, the thief quickly revealed the hiding-place of the Golden Tomahawk. A few yards down the face of the crevasse was a tiny cave. It could only be reached by hanging from the weather-toughened roots of a stout fir on the crevasse edge.

Leaving Grey Feather to guard the Redman, Joe clambered down and crawled into the tiny black cave. Striking a match, he gasped with surprise at what confronted him.

In that tiny cave was not only the Golden Tomahawk, but heaps of other stolen property, the result of months of organised robbery. The cave was a veritable treasure cache.

When Joe clambered back into the moonlight to report what he had found, Grey Feather beamed with delight at the return of his priceless Golden Tomahawk. But ere he could offer his thanks, the little wanderer decided to return the thief to the lock-up.

Just as dawn was breaking the sheriff of Blue Falls had the surprise of his life when Joe led the prisoner—whom he thought had escaped—into his office.

"The dirty Red coyote would ha' gotten clean away," Joe chuckled, "if I hadn't lit eyes on him up the hills, sheriff."

He gave the sheriff all the details. Then Joe returned to Grey Feather.

"I owe you my thanks, paleface brother," said the grateful Redskin, as they rode along in the warm sunshine. "Months ago my illustrious father fell ill—my father is the chief of our tribe. Only expert medical treatment would save his life, and it was to secure the dollars necessary that I took a job with the circus."

"Gee, that was mighty fine o' yo', son!" Joe exclaimed. "But, say, what's the low-down on that Golden Tomahawk o' yores?"

"It is the tomahawk of my illustrious father," Grey Feather explained. "The Golden Tomahawk is the sacred mascot of my tribe. It was handed to me with my father's blessing before he was taken to the distant house of healing. That, my brother, is why I would have gone to the ends of the earth to recover it. I can never thank you enough——"

"Don't try!" grinned Joe.

(Don't miss next Friday week's grand Rover Joe adventure.) 23-9-44

BOOKED FOR TROUBLE.

"I believe the library is on fire!"

"What makes you think it's the library?"

"'Cos the smoke is rolling out in volumes!"

Here's a Merry Mirthquake!

TEA FOR TWO!

The Picnic.

THE weather was bright and sunny, far too good to stay indoors. So thought Mr. Timothy Tickler as he stood staring out of the window, scratching his double chin.

"Now, what shall I do this afternoon?" he muttered. "And where shall I go? It's an ideal day to be out in the country instead of a stuffy town. Just the sort of day for a picnic. Aha! The very thing! That gives me an idea. I'll go out for a picnic, all on my own."

Thus decided, Timothy lost no time in making preparations. He packed a small hamper with provisions and did not forget a kettle and a small spirit stove so that he could make a cup of tea when the time came.

"There, I think that will be all I shall require," he tootled, surveying the contents of the hamper. "Now to get off."

He closed the hamper and took it outside, where he strapped it on to his bicycle. For Timothy intended to ride out on it to some quiet and attractive country spot where he could have his picnic and spend a pleasant afternoon out in the open.

"I think I'll make for Nutbury," he decided as he set off from the house. "The country's very pretty round there, and I shall have no difficulty in finding a pleasant little spot."

He made no attempt to scorch, for the afternoon was yet young—and Timothy wasn't. He was a podgy gentleman in the early fifties, wearing spectacles perched on the tip of his nose, beneath which drooped a small moustache which looked sort of sorry for itself.

However, Timothy looked cheery enough as he pedalled along. He was a cheerful, simple sort of soul, who never let anything worry him much. And he was looking forward confidently to an enjoyable afternoon's outing.

A puncture in his front tyre pulled him up after he had covered a couple of miles, by which time he was well out in the country. He dismounted and set about repairing it, a job which took him about half an hour and left him somewhat grimy.

Then he went on his way once more, and was going down a slope at a fine speed, with the breeze fanning his face, when there came a loud pop. It was another puncture, this time in his back tyre.

And it sent the bike into a sudden skid which jolted Timothy clean out of the saddle. But he landed on the soft grass at the side of the road none the worse for wear.

"This is rather unfortunate!" he murmured. "Two punctures already. Apart from the job of repairing them, it means losing time, which I don't want to do. However, it can't be helped."

The second puncture was patched, the tube put back and pumped up, and the journey resumed. And Timothy at last came in sight of the little village of Nutbury, his destination, without further mishaps.

He enjoyed a glass of lemonade in the village. Then he rode through it into the open country beyond, looking for a likely spot where he could spend the afternoon.

Before long he found what looked like the very thing. It was a shady corner of a field with plenty of trees swaying gently in the breeze.

"This'll do me!" tootled Timothy as he pushed his bike through an open gate. "This'll suit me down to the ground."

But appearances were deceptive. For Timothy discovered that the reason why the grass was so green just there was because the ground was all soggy and wet. Parking himself there was out of the question.

So he pushed on, working his way across the field and hoping for the best. About ten minutes later his patience was rewarded.

He reached a spot nicely shaded by trees, where the ground was soft but quite dry. With a sigh of relief he propped his bicycle against one tree, then sat down and propped his broad back against another.

A fat tramp was wading into the spread with gusto!

"This is ideal!" he gurgled, tilting his hat over his eyes. "I think I'll just drop off for a little nap. I'm a bit tired after that ride from home."

He closed his eyes and tried to drop off, only to find that it was easier said than done. As if at a given signal, swarms of flies and midges came from all parts and buzzed round Timothy, who was kept busy chasing them away.

The more he chased them the more they came back, as though it was all a funny game. It may have been funny for the insects, but it was not long before Timothy became thoroughly fed up with it. Instead of resting in the cool, he was getting red-hot and perspiring from his exertions.

"Phew! Out of this for me!" he snorted at last. "I can't stand it any longer."

He got up, grabbed his bike, and pushed on once more. The flies followed him for some distance, then, realising that the game was over, they at last buzzed off.

"Looks as though I'm going to have trouble finding a spot for my picnic!" grunted Timothy as he trudged along in the hot sunshine. "I wonder if it'll be all right over there?"

He referred to another inviting spot some distance ahead, and on reaching it he decided to give it a trial. There was only one tree, but it was a big one and gave all the shade he required. His bicycle he rested against the shady side of a haystack a few yards distant.

"And now let's hope I can settle down at last," he exclaimed with a sigh as he sank to earth and made himself comfortable.

This time nothing disturbed him, and he quickly dropped off, to enjoy a nap that lasted about an hour. He woke with a start, blinked around, then realised where he was.

"Well, that sleep's done me good!" he declared. "And the air's making me feel quite peckish. I think I'll see about having something to eat."

He undid the hamper, took out a small cloth and spread it on the grass. Then he produced the pie, sandwiches and other food which he had brought with him.

"Looks all right to me!" gurgled Timothy, running his optics over the spread approvingly. "All I want is a cup of tea to wash it down. Where can I get some water to fill my kettle?"

He looked around and spotted a house on the horizon. So, deciding that he could safely leave the spread, as there was no sign of a soul anywhere, Timothy proceeded to trudge over the grassy field, taking his kettle with him.

It was a fairly long walk to the house. But a buxom woman cheerfully greeted him and filled his kettle with water. Then, having thanked her, Timothy made his way back.

"I'm feeling hungrier than ever!" he warbled. "There won't be much left of that feed by the time I've finished with it."

As it happened, there was not much left of it before Timothy had the chance to start on it. On getting back to his shady corner he saw a sight that nearly jolted his spectacles off his nose.

Sitting on the grass was a fat tramp, wading into Timothy's spread with gusto. A large hole had already been made in the pie, and the grimy, uninvited guest was in the act of shovelling a sandwich into his face.

"What—what are you doing with my grub?" gasped Timothy when he could recover his voice.

"Enjoying it!" was the saucy retort. "So it's your little lot, is it? Well, it's the goods—the best feed I've had for a month of fortnights. Sit down and join me. There's enough for two!"

The tramp's cheek almost took Timothy's breath away.

"How dare you?" he cried. "I've a good mind to call a policeman!"

"By all means!" tootled the tramp. "Only you'll have to call very loudly, 'cos the nearest one's about a couple of miles away, and it's his afternoon off, anyway. Now, look here. Be matey. Sit down and join in."

And Timothy, being a simple, good-natured sort, eventually decided that in the circumstances that was the best thing to do. So he sank down on the other side of the spread.

"All right," he said. "As you say, there's plenty for the two of us, and I expect you can do with a good meal, my poor fellow."

"Ah, now you're talking like a toff!" declared the tramp. "Look here, you feed your face for a bit—I've had some to be going on with—and I'll make the tea. I can just do with a cup, and I expect you can."

So the tramp got busy boiling the water for the tea, which was soon being enjoyed. And Timothy found that his companion was splendid company.

The tea and the grub finally disappeared, and both men sat back with a sigh of content.

"How did you get down here?" asked the tramp presently.

"I came on my bike," explained Timothy. "It's on the other side of that haystack. I'd better go and see if it's all right and still there."

He went off, and soon returned with a long face.

"The bike's still there," he groaned. "But both tyres are down flat, and I've no more repair outfit with me. Unless I can find a place where I can have the punctures mended I shall have to push the grid all the way back home."

"Hard luck," grinned the tramp. "But there'll be no need to do that, so you needn't worry. I'll fix you up."

"What — what do you mean?" stammered Timothy. "Can you mend the punctures for me?"

"No, I can't, but I can do something better," the unwashed one grinned. "Pack up these things in the hamper and let's get down to the road."

So the things were packed, and Timothy accompanied the tramp down to the road, wondering why he was grinning and chuckling as though at some huge joke. He was also wondering what the tramp could do to help him.

A little later a big car came along, and then Timothy had another shock. The tramp waved, and the car pulled up close by.

"We're giving this gent a lift and his bike as well, Jimmy," said the tramp to the driver. "He's been very good to me. Stood me a feed while you went on to the town to get that stuff for me and left me here."

Absolutely dazed, Timothy saw his bike fixed firmly on to the back of the car. Then he was ushered inside, and the tramp got in beside him, grinning more than ever.

"You see, I'm not a tramp at all," he explained. "I'm Jerry Jinkle, the comedian. Perhaps you've heard of me. I'm going round the camps, entertaining the boys, and I'm on to a show now in my make-up. Perhaps you'd like to come along, and I'll see you safe home afterwards."

Needless to say, the delighted Timothy accepted the invitation and had a very enjoyable wind-up to his day's outing.

(Another of these jolly yarns next Friday week.) 23-9-44

How THE THREE MUSTARDEERS helped to save

THE V SECRETS

SHE seemed a very tired old lady as she trudged along the country lane towards the Three Mustardeers, who were sitting on a gate. Roger jumped down and offered to carry her suitcase. "Thank you, my boy," she replied, smiling gratefully. "When I get to Telside I'll be sitting down, but it's taking me all my time to walk there." Mary and Jim joined them, and they all walked along together.

Slowly they approached a new building, the only form of habitation for miles around. As they were passing the entrance, the old lady staggered, stretched out her hand for support, and sank to the ground. A door porter stepped forward to help her. Assisted by

Roger, he carried her into the building, Mary following with the old lady's case. But Jim stood for a moment, deep in thought, a puzzled frown across his brow. Then he joined the others in the porter's room.

The old lady recovered. "There, I'll be all right in a minute or two. You children needn't wait. And if you could get me a drink of water . . ." She turned to the porter with a wan smile. "And a cigarette," added Jim. Mary turned a shocked face to Jim. But the old lady smiled and said: "No, my boy, I'm too old for cigarettes." "In that case," said Jim, "why is your right index finger so stained with nicotine?" The old lady started and instinctively covered her right hand. "And," went on Jim, "I'm wondering how far you've walked with that case—or did you come so far by car? There isn't a station or bus nearer than seven miles." "That's right, my boy," answered the old lady, "I got a lift from a kind gentleman, and . . ." "In that case," persisted Jim, "how is it that you were walking when we saw you? There's no house between the station and here—there are no turnings off the road—and no car passed us!" "Come, come, my boy, I'm too weak to answer your silly questions. Send these children away, porter, and do please bring me a glass of water," said the old lady. "Well, lady, this boy's set me wondering a bit," answered the porter. "I'd like to see your Identity Card—and make a few enquiries." At that, the old lady got up, feebly, and, picking up her suitcase, slowly made to the door. But the moment she was there, she whipped round. Her age seemed to disappear. She snatched a small bottle from her hand-bag. "A very deadly gas for inquisitive boys and stupid porters," she laughed, and hurled the bottle into the room. But as she turned to pluck the key from the door, so that she could lock her victims in, Roger dived at her. She fought like a tiger, but the Mustardeers and the porter soon overpowered her and dragged her from the poisoned air of the room. In her suitcase was found enough bottled phosphorus to burn the building down in a quarter of an hour. It was only when this was found that the Mustardeers were told that this building was one of Britain's hush-hush research centres, a place of V secrets where some of our latest "weapons" had been brought to perfection. The supposed old lady was a Nazi agent whose ruse to plant her phosphorus very nearly worked. Jim was given a hearty vote of thanks by all the staff for his keen powers of observation.

SAID JIM: "*It's something we all should have known, as the Girl Guide said to her chums when they found that meat was nicer with Mustard.*"

THE MUSTARDEERS' OATH

We will have mustard whenever we can get it. It makes good food taste better. It helps us to keep healthy and strong. We will have Mustard—

COLMAN'S MUSTARD

PINHEAD and PETE

EVERYTHING TURNS OUT 'APPLE'Y!

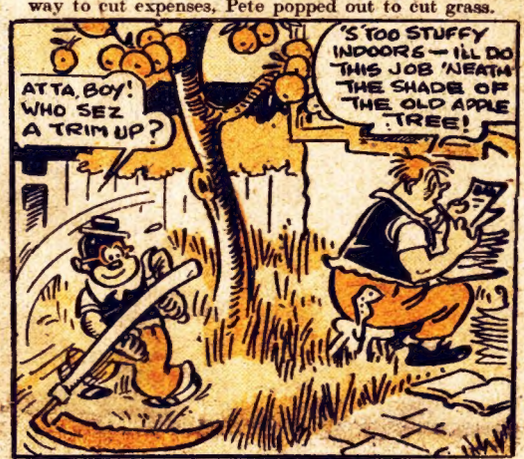
1. Having enjoyed their well-earned summer holiday, our old friends returned to their home-sweet-home last week. "Coo! What a transformation scene!" gasped Pinhead. "Just look!"

2. "Look as if we shall hab to get down to work right away!" cooed the coon. Then he pushed open the front door, and nearly tripped over a tall pile of letters, at sight of which Pinhead began to groan.

3. "Jumping jamjars! What a welcome home!" he sighed. "They're all bills, and we're broke to the wide! What's to be did?" So while he figured out a way to cut expenses, Pete popped out to cut grass.

4. However, just in case he overworked himself for a start, the clever coon decided to only give the lawn a light trim with a pair of scissors. But the sight of those pippins made his mouth water—

5. So he did not get very far with the job, until Pinhead suddenly appeared and helped him on his way. "Get out of it!" he hooted. "Scissors are no use! And you leave those pippins alone!"



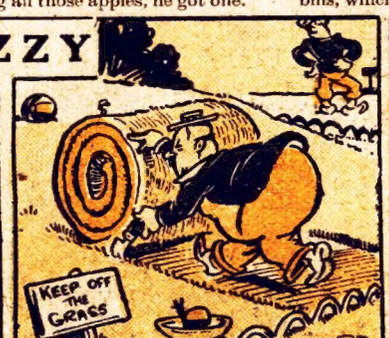
6. Then, telling Pete to fetch a scythe and get on with the good work, he parked himself 'neath the old apple tree to do his reckoning. "I shall now be able to keep an eye on that coon!" he thought.

7. But Pete did not need any watching. Oh, no! "I guess dis will soon make a clean sweep ob all de obergrown grass!" puffed Pete. But by a stroke of bad luck the scythe miscued and sliced off the tree.

8. Poor old Pinhead was fairly bowled out, and as he went down for the full count as though crowned with a coke-hammer, the greengrocer called round for orders. And on seeing all those apples, he got one.

9. In fact, Pete did business with him in quite a big way. Yes, by selling him all the prize pippins he had harvested, he received enough dough to pay all their bills, which was a great weight off his old pal's mind.

DIZZY



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